

KENNY C. GUINN
Governor



Nevada State Veterans Home – Boulder City
100 Veterans Memorial Drive
Boulder City, NV 89005
(702) 332-6864 • Fax (702) 332-6762

Office of Veterans Services
950 W. Owens, Rm. 111
Las Vegas, Nevada
(702) 636-3070 • Fax (702) 486-5268

Northern Nevada Veterans
Memorial Cemetery
P.O. Box 1919
Fernley, Nevada 89408
(775) 575-4441 • Fax (775) 575-5713

STATE OF NEVADA
OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES
1201 Terminal Way No. 215
Reno, NV 89502
(775) 688-1653 • Fax (775) 688-1656

Southern Nevada Veterans
Memorial Cemetery
1900 Buchanan Boulevard
Boulder City, Nevada 89005
(702) 486-5920 • Fax (702) 486-5923

As the war in Iraq continues, we are reminded of the courage shown by the men and women who serve in our Armed Forces today, as well as those who have served our country in the past. This session, the Nevada Legislature enacted a number of measures for veterans.

Several provisions in **ASSEMBLY BILL 580** are relevant to veterans and to Nevadans who are currently in active service. First, this bill creates a Patriot Relief Account to provide aid for Nevada National Guard members who have been called into active duty and who are experiencing financial hardships. Funds from the account will also reimburse Guard members for certain life insurance premiums and for textbooks used in courses at Nevada's public colleges and universities. In addition, this bill provides that actively serving members of the National Guard and their immediate families are entitled to the same sales tax exemptions as State agencies. The measure further ensures that public officers and employees who perform active military service in a time of war or emergency are entitled to civil leave with reduced pay. Their pay may be reduced only by the base amount received for military service, not including imminent danger compensation or family separation allowances.

Also of interest to public employees serving in the military is **SENATE BILL 122**. This bill allows persons with at least five years of service credit in the Public Employees' Retirement System to purchase up to three additional years of service credit, based on service during Operation Desert Storm, Operation Enduring Freedom, or Operation Iraqi Freedom. Eligible public employees may buy a number of months equal to the time they served on active military duty during those operations.

More items relating to veterans are included in **SENATE BILL 1 OF THE 22ND SPECIAL SESSION**. This bill creates the Nevada War on Terrorism Medal for Reservists and members of the National Guard who are called into active duty on the global war on terrorism. The medal will also be awarded to certain civilian government and National Guard employees who serve in support of the war. This bill additionally provides money for Nye and Esmeralda Counties to establish a joint Office of Coordinator of Services for Veterans. Finally, this measure, appropriates funds to construct a road into the Northern Nevada Veterans' Memorial Cemetery in Fernley.

Funding for other relevant capital projects is included In **SENATE BILL 524**. This bill provides money to establish a Las Vegas readiness center for the Nevada National Guard and to acquire land for future National Guard facility and training sites. Funding is also provided for construction at the veterans' home in Boulder City.

Two bills this session lowered college costs for individuals serving in the Armed Forces. **SENATE BILL 78** allows the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) to continue waiving registration and lab fees for active members of the

Nevada National Guard. In addition, **SENATE BILL 32** extends the free tuition benefit for Nevada residents to all members of the Armed Forces, regardless of their residency status.

Next, **ASSEMBLY BILL 26** focuses on care costs at veterans' homes, requiring the State Board of Examiners to establish an annual schedule of rates to be charged for occupancy at these facilities. The rates will be set after recommendations are made by the Office of Veterans' Services, with advice from the Nevada Veterans' Services Commission.

Under **ASSEMBLY BILL 130**, the Office of Veterans' Services will also be responsible for recommending nominees to the Governor for appointment to the Nevada Veterans' Services Commission. These recommendations had previously been provided by the Adjutant General.

In other matters, **ASSEMBLY BILL 145** clarifies that veterans with more than one permanent service-related disability may combine their percentages of disability for property tax exemption purposes. For example, if a veteran is 40 percent physically disabled and 10 percent mentally disabled, he will have a total disability of 50 percent. This final combined percentage will then be used in determining the amount of the veteran's property tax exemption.

Further, **ASSEMBLY BILL 307** requires the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to ask all individuals who apply for an instruction permit, driver's license, or identification card whether they wish to declare that they are veterans of the Armed Forces. The DMV must record the number of declarations and report that figure to the Office of Veterans' Services each quarter for statistical uses.

SENATE BILL 114 clarifies that hiring preferences for public works projects must first be given to Nevada citizens who were honorably discharged from the United States Armed Forces, the Reserves, or the National Guard. This hiring preference must be applied by both contractors and public bodies that employ people in the construction of public works.

Finally, **SENATE BILL 270** allows certain unclaimed property to be transferred to a veterans' or military museum if the property has military or military historical value.